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Letter from H. C. Lewis to Gentlemen

H. C. Lewis

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MISS- SEGREGATION

G E O R G E N A N G E N & C O.

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AMERICAN NATIONAL BANK BUILDING 33 NORTH LA SALLE STREET CHICAGO 2, ILLINOIS ANDOVER 3-6183

December 16, 1959

Association of Citizens Councils
Greenwood, Mississippi

Gentlemen:

I want to express my deep appreciation for the material sent to me last week, pertaining to the problem of integration. I have studied it carefully and am convinced that your approach to the problem will command respect. The absence of prejudice or emotionalism lends great credence to your arguments.

You may be interested to know that a week ago the North Shore Residents Association polled Deerfield Residents to determine how many favored the integrated project and how many were opposed. The tabulation of ballots showed that 460 favored the project with 3,507 opposing; 56 expressing no opinion. It is my feeling that this ratio would prove to be typical of residents anywhere in the North if confronted with a similar situation. The impression that you may have that the North is trying to force integration down the throats of the South is understandable, although false.

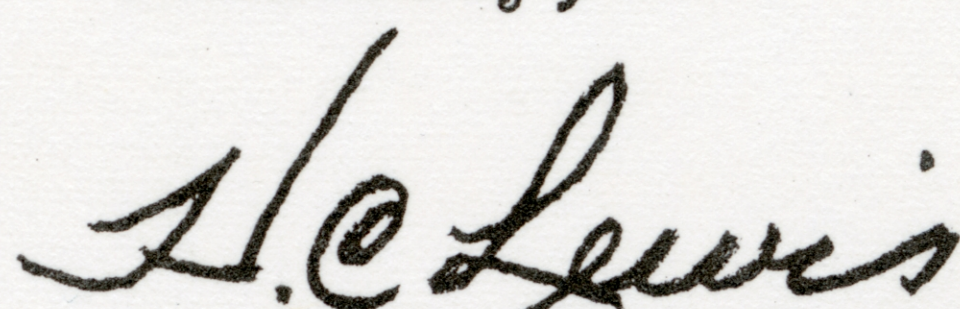
It is my personal opinion that there is little sincerity on the part of either Northern politicians or news media in their advocacy of integration. It is purely political. I gather that both parties are anticipating a fairly evenly divided white vote in the next national elections, which, if confirmed, would put the balance of power into the hands of the negro voters. The result? Each party is trying to outbid the other to attract negro votes. A recent article in the Chicago Daily News pointed out that Democrats are concerned about the defection from their ranks by negro voters during the last two national elections. It further stated that even a stronger civil rights platform is under consideration.

It has been most difficult, almost impossible, to get an even break from news media in the reporting of our Deerfield problem. As you have probably observed, crushing pressure is being brought to bear on us by church groups and many other organizations seeking to impose instant and compulsory integration. In spite of all this, the Deerfield citizenry has thus far remained united and determined to resist at any cost. I only hope that nothing will happen to change its mind.

I would imagine that determined resistance would be easier to maintain in the South than in the North, although the consequences of defeat would be far more devastating. At least you do not have to fight your political leaders and ministers and newspapers to the extent we must up here. Any support that you can give us will be most helpful. A little encouragement now and then can be strong medicine for an embattled village. The technique being employed by Modern Community Developers, Inc., of Princeton, New Jersey, and its wholly owned subsidiary Progress Development Corporation is based upon a stealthy approach to a community, a conspiracy to deceive its government and residents until it is too late and then the marshalling of great pressure to force compliance. We in Deerfield feel an obligation to other helpless communities to defeat this project lest it becomes an approved technique for the destruction of other communities. We shall do our best.

In the meantime, if it is possible to raise a few prominent voices in our behalf, we shall be forever indebted to you.

Sincerely,



H. C. Lewis, Chairman
North Shore Residents Association

HCL:FZ

Riverwood Road & Woodland Lane
Deerfield, Illinois